

February 1, 2008



Finance Committee

1. Civil Service Employee Reclassification

The HR Manager, Liz Zorc, has completed her evaluation of the Civil Service Commissioner's request to upgrade the Civil Service position. Liz reports that she has continued to have a difficult time finding good comparisons for the Kent Civil Service position to establish a market pay rate. It appears that different cities use a number of different combinations of Human Resource personnel and Civil Service positions to perform the Civil Service duties. In addition, few Civil Service positions work for both the City and the School system like Kent and as pointed out by the Commissioners few cities use the statutory Civil Service standards like Kent. All of these differences make comparisons difficult but after her review, Liz reports that she thought a single step pay raise was not unreasonable given the level of work performed by this position. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

The Civil Service position is technically outside the purview of the City Manager which is why the HR Manager and I did not previously offer a recommendation to Council on this upgrade request. However, since Council referred the item back to staff the HR Manager has suggested a pay raise of one step which I believe is fair compensation for the position and I support that recommendation.

Council Action

Authorize a single step upgrade for the Civil Service position.

2. DKC Operating Agreement Amendment

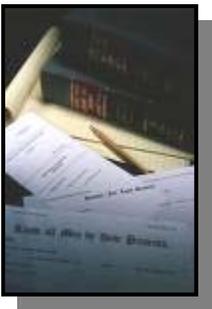
Jim Silver has drafted a few amendments to the DKC operating agreement for Council's consideration. Jim advises that he would like to clarify a few points in the agreement that relate to the purchase and ownership of properties. Jim and Dave Williams (attorney for DKC) report that the proposed amendments clarify the agreement to specifically allow DKC to act on Council's behalf, with City Council consent, to purchase property whether or not the DKC loan fund is used. Jim will explain these changes in Committee. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Previously the DKC used the loan fund to acquire properties at City Council's request but sometimes it may be beneficial to use funds other than the loan fund (line of credit) so I support Jim's recommended amendments to the operating agreement.

Council Action

Review and approve the proposed amendments to the DKC Operating Agreement.





3. Cable Service Fees

Jim Silver reports that Ohio law has changed and local governments can no longer use franchise agreements and franchise fees to regulate cable service providers. However, Jim says that the City can pass legislation to collect the same 5% fees that we used to collect through franchise fees and he will review that draft legislation with Council.

Administration Recommendation

Given our revenue constraints I would encourage Council to approve the proposed cable service fees to replace the old franchise fees and keep our revenues whole.

Council Action

Approve and adopt the new cable service fee legislation.

Land Use Committee

4. Thoroughfare Plan Revision

In the review of the proposed new housing development at the old Lappin Farms property, residents in the Forest Lakes subdivision and from the neighboring Franklin Township testified before the Planning Commission to express their concerns with traffic safety related to the developer's proposal to extend Sunset Way through the development from Fairchild Avenue to Johnson Road. The City's Thoroughfare Plan includes a street connection between Fairchild and Johnson Road but with the prospect of the new development the residents believe that this will encourage significant cut-thru traffic. As a compromise the Planning Commission voted to recommend changing the Thoroughfare Plan to connect Sunset Way to Newcomer Road and remove the connection to Johnson Road. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

From the staff perspective, it is imperative to maintain a second access point to the neighborhood for emergency service response which appears to be accomplished by the modification in a way that satisfies both the developer and the residents so I request Council's support for the Plan revision.

Council Action

Approve the proposed revision to the Thoroughfare Plan.

Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee

5. NOPEC Update

County Commissioner Chuck Keiper has requested time with City Council to provide an overview on the status of the NOPEC agreement. Mr. Keiper will discuss current programs and plans for NOPEC. In addition, Mr. Keiper is looking for Council's support for a resolution that continues the "Opt-Out Governmental Aggregation" clause. Gene has attached a copy of the requested legislation that Mr. Keiper will discuss.

Administration Recommendation

Gene Roberts is the lead staff on NOPEC issues and he advises that he believes our participation in NOPEC has reduced Kent residents' utility bills by 30% so he and I recommend continuing to support NOPEC and Mr. Keiper's legislative request.

Council Action

Review and discuss NOPEC issues, vote to support the Opt-Out clause.



Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee (cont.)



6. AMATS Projects Application

In January Council authorized staff to advise AMATS of our intent to apply for project funding for Summit Street Traffic Signal Coordination and an extension of the Portage Hike and Bike Trail. AMATS has now advertised that project applications are due February 22nd so City Engineer Jim Bowling has requested Committee time to seek Council's approval to submit the application for AMATS transportation funds for those two Kent projects. Jim will review the project applications with Council in Committee. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Jim reports that the preliminary cost estimates included in the application would leverage \$1 million in City Capital project funds (already approved in City capital plan) to obtain an additional \$10 million in outside funding sources for the Summit Street Traffic Signal Improvements. These are two important projects in Kent and I request Council's approval of the grant applications.

Council Action

Authorize staff to submit the application materials for AMATS funding.

7. Crain/Fairchild Avenue Bridge ROW Acquisitions

In January Council authorized staff to proceed with the negotiated ROW agreements (referred to as Packet A) required for the Crain/Fairchild Avenue Bridge. Jim Bowling has now prepared another group of negotiated ROW agreements (referred to as Packet B) that requires Council authorization. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

The negotiated prices comply with the process required by the Federal Right Of Way acquisition process that we have to use because of the Federal dollars used in the project. So far, 11 out of 47 owners have agreed to terms. I am requesting Council's approval of Packet B and I'd like to propose that Council consider allowing staff to not spend Committee time on these items and bring them to Council as unauthorized. We will be sure to share the information with you but I'm thinking it's probably not worth spending too much time on these small Right of Way matters.

Council Action

Approve the proposed Right of Way payments and authorize staff to bring future payments as unauthorized.

8. Crain Avenue Citizen Advisory Committee

City Engineer Jim Bowling has requested Committee time to seek Council's guidance on the composition of the Crain Avenue Citizen Advisory Committee. With the changes in Council, staff needs to know who Council wishes to appoint to the Committee. Gene has provided a short summary of the Committee membership history that I have attached. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Staff needs Council direction on Committee appointments.

Council Action

Advise and recommend Committee composition.



Streets, Sidewalks and Utilities Committee (cont.)

9. Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP) Changes

Jennifer Barone, Development Engineer, and Gary Locke, Development Director have requested Committee time to review two modifications that they are proposing to improve the implementation of the City's Stormwater regulations. After 4 years of experience managing the City's Stormwater regulations, the staff has found two areas that they believe require revision. Jen will present the requested changes to the Erosion Controls Ordinance in Committee and she has also included a summary that I have attached. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Stormwater management is a critical component of our City programs to serve the environment. City Council has made environmental preservation (and water quality) one of its sustainability goals and to that end I recommend Council's approval of these proposed changes as they will have a positive impact on environmental quality and uphold Council's goals.

Council Action

Accept and approve the modifications to the City's Erosion Control Ordinance.

Health and Safety Committee

10. Portage Street Parking Modifications

Bill Lillich has been working with the Parking Action Committee to implement the changes to the parking regulations that were authorized by City Council for the western end of Portage Street. Bill has provided some clarification language to the ordinance and the posted signs for Council's consideration. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

I support Bill's recommended modifications and I encourage Council's authorization.

Council Action

Approve the proposed parking modifications for Portage Street.

11. Earth Day Street Closure Permit

Bill Lillich has been working with Main Street Kent to respond to a request from Jeff Ingram to allow the Earth Day event – Who's Your Mama – to close Main Street between Depeyster and Water Street on April 19th, 2008 for staging of more environmental events. Bill advises that any new street closure for a specific event requires Council authorization. Bill will review this matter with Council in Committee. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

I support Council's consideration of authorizing the street closure as part of the Earth Day event.

Council Action

Approve the proposed street closure permit request.



Community Development Committee

12. Trash Hauling Discussion

Gene Roberts has been working with John Ferlito to prepare a presentation to Council concerning options to consider regarding possible changes to trash service management in Kent. As you know, Kent residents currently make arrangements with a private trash hauler for trash service on their own. Many communities have decided that there are advantages to their residents to have the city participate in managing trash services and Gene has information he would like to present that describes the possible advantages to Kent for the City to take a more direct role in the management of trash services. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Gene's data suggests that residents can save money, collection days can be better coordinated, trash truck impacts on neighborhoods can be reduced, and the City's ability to enforce trash violations at nuisance properties could all benefit from having the City take a more progressive role in managing trash service in Kent so I would encourage Council's support for further study and ask staff to come back with a specific recommendation for next steps.

Council Action

Review and discuss trash service issues and provide staff guidance on Council's interest in implementing possible changes.

Information Items

1. Franklin Township Fire Service Rates for 2008

According to the terms of the Fire Service Agreement between the City of Kent and the Franklin Township, each year the City recalculates the cost for fire service based on prior year data. Bill Lillich has completed that analysis and he is recommending an increase from \$1,067 per call to \$1,092 per call charged to the Township. Bill's letter to the Township Trustees is attached for Council's information. (attachment)

2. Kent / Franklin Township Snow Plow Discussions

We talk a lot about the need to encourage more collaborations with our neighboring jurisdictions so I wanted to share some information with you of an on-going discussion between Gene Roberts and the Franklin Township Trustees exploring the possibility of improved snow operations as an example of the kinds of collaborative efforts that the staff pursue all the time. (see attachment)

3. Council Planning and Activity Report

As part of our effort this year to do more advance agenda planning I've been working with Linda and the staff to look ahead and develop the Council agendas early. Doing this has allowed us to begin to see trends in how we spend our time as staff and as Council. In order to help see those trends, I have begun plotting our topics and the time we spend within a framework of adopted City Council goals and objectives (identified in the Bicentennial Plan, Sustainability Plan, and Council Goals). The idea of this effort is to help us make sure that we're scheduling topics for the agenda that are consistent with Council's strategic goals and to track how much time we spend in any particular area. I have included a copy of the draft spreadsheet that we've been using for this effort. It is still a draft that I hope to be able to modify as the year goes on so if you have comments please feel free to share them with me. My goal is to use the spreadsheet as a way to better manage our performance as staff and Council by measuring how well we stay focused on our priority areas. (attachment)

